

Love God. Love People.

## Love God. Love People.

There are a lot of commands in the Scriptures, but when Jesus was asked which were the most important, He answered with these words, "Love God....Love People." Today we discover what that looks like in everyday life.

### onlinenotes

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\* All Scripture is from CSB (Christian Standard Bible) unless otherwise noted.

**Mark 12:28** CSB <sup>28</sup> One of the scribes approached. When he heard them debating and saw that Jesus answered them well, he asked him, "**Which command is the most important of all?**"

Of the 613 commands in the Old Testament Scriptures (248 positive commands, 365 prohibitions), debate lingers as which were most important. Some rabbis said "*Children obey your parents*" was the most important command, while other rabbis focused on love for God.<sup>1</sup> Now Jesus gets his shot to share His answer to the question, "**which is the most important of all?**" Jesus quotes from the **Shema** (meaning "hear/listen"), a scriptural prayer that faithful Jews offered up every morning and evening<sup>2</sup> (a practice from at least the 2nd century BC<sup>3</sup>). \* 3 *Shema* passages are from Deut 6:4-9; 11:13-21; Num 15:37-41

Love God

**Mark 12:29-30** <sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, "The most important is **Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God, the Lord is one.** <sup>30</sup> **Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.**

We are to **love God with every fiber of our being**. Why should we love God? John answers this simply.

**1 John 4:19** We love because **he first loved us**.

- ✓ **God created us.**
- ✓ **He provides for us daily.**
- ✓ **Jesus died for us.**

To *Love God*, we must **KNOW Him, OBEY Him, & GROW in Him**.

- ✓ **Know Him.** We think about WHO God is - our King Creator - we want to **know Him** more.
- ✓ **Obey Him.** Jesus told His disciples:

**John 14:23-24** <sup>23</sup> Jesus answered, "**If anyone loves me, he will keep my word.** My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. <sup>24</sup> The one who doesn't love me will not keep my words. The word that you hear is not mine but is from the Father who sent me.

We love God when we think and act in ways that please Him in our daily decisions. When you love God, doing the right thing becomes a **PRIVILEGE** instead of a problem.

- ✓ **Grow in Him.** We should be growing and helping others, instead of staying spiritual infants.

**Hebrews 5:12** Although **by this time you ought to be teachers**, you need someone to teach you the basic principles of God's revelation again. **You need milk**, not solid food.

We should talk to God as we pray throughout the day. We should develop disciplines to read, memorize, marinate in, and apply what He tells us in the Scriptures.

<sup>1</sup> Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2009), 530.

<sup>2</sup> Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:27-16:20, vol. 34B, Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2001), 263.

<sup>3</sup> Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001), 330-331.

## LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL OTHERS

**Matthew 10:34-39** <sup>34</sup> Don't assume that I came to bring peace on the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. <sup>35</sup> For I came to turn *a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;* <sup>36</sup> and a man's enemies will be the members of his household. [from Micah 7:6] <sup>37</sup> The one who **loves a father or mother more than me is not worthy of me;** the one who **loves a son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.** <sup>38</sup> And whoever doesn't take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. <sup>39</sup> Anyone who finds his life will lose it, and anyone who loses his life because of me will find it.

**So, if it ever came down to it, who would you choose,** parents, children, spouse, friends, your own desires, your own life...or would you choose Jesus? Does HE have your full allegiance?

1. **Make an early appointment with God.** Go to bed on time and get up to give God the 1st part of your day for at least 15 minutes.
2. **Open the Scriptures and Pray.** a) Read a chapter writing what you learn and questions you have. b) Consider writing down what you are thankful for, along with your prayer needs.
3. **Pray & Obey throughout the day.** Practice the Presence of God by praying and obeying Him at all times. Turn away from anything that tempts to take us away from him having first place in our lives.



## Love People

**Mark 12:31** The second is, **Love your neighbor as yourself.** There is no other command greater than these."

This command from Lev. 19:18, a **neighbor** only included other Jews living in the community - **friends and family.** *But Jesus greatly expanded what it meant to love your neighbors* when he was asked, "**So, who is my neighbor?**" Jesus tells the story of **the Good Samaritan** (Luke 10:25-29), which included caring different ethnicities whom Jews were taught to despise. According to Jesus, a neighbor could be someone you've never met who has a need that you can now meet.

So, *loving our neighbors includes LOVING PEOPLE ranging from our best friends to our most recent acquaintance.* And then...there are our **ENEMIES.**

## LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

**Matthew 5:43-48** <sup>43</sup> "You have heard that it was said, **Love your neighbor** and hate your enemy. <sup>44</sup> But I tell you, **love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,** <sup>45</sup> so that you may be children of your Father in heaven. For he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. <sup>46</sup> For if you love those who love you, what reward will you have? Don't even the tax collectors do the same? <sup>47</sup> And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what are you doing out of the ordinary? Don't even the Gentiles do the same? <sup>48</sup> Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

To love your enemies is to treat the PERSON with value, even if you don't agree with their POSITIONS or views.

➡ LOVE is NOT feelings of affection. Love is an ATTITUDE & ACTION that both desires & demonstrates that you want the best for another person.

**Romans 12:14** Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

To love your enemies means to **bless** them, to treat them with kindness (as God does by sending rain to them) & **pray** for God's goodness in their lives.

### How have you responded to your enemies?

- With unkind words or with kind words, harshness or love?
  - Did you **pray** for them before you responded with anger or berated them to others?
- ✓ In this time of social distancing, we must be careful in how we use social media. Stand for TRUTH, but never without LOVE.

Your Notes:

*VERSE 1*

Somebody posted something  
Somebody disagreed  
Somebody started typing things  
They probably didn't mean  
And now my heart is breaking  
As I read every word  
Sticks and stones are nothing  
Compared to how this hurts

*CHORUS*

We all wanna know we matter  
We all wanna know we're loved  
More the same than we are different  
Desperate just to be enough  
But it's like we've all forgotten  
How much we're all connected  
When I read the comment section

*VERSE 2*

I've been the harshest critic  
I have bullied like a king  
Tyrannical and comfortable  
Here behind a screen  
We all have our politics  
But politics aside  
All of us are only human  
With a fragile heart inside

*BRIDGE*

Love your enemy  
Be kind to both of things  
Imagine what this world could be

**Sidewalk Prophets**  
*The Comment Section*



1. **Pray** for your friends & enemies.
2. **Show value** to your friends & enemies.
3. Before you post something that could be divisive, **run it past another mature believer.**

## heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

- \* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Justin** (704-618-6144), **Christy** (673-9764), or another follower of Jesus soon!
- \* Or call our **deacons & wives**: Steve & Debbie Bass (673-7952), Freddy & Joyce Howard (973-0047), Jere & Darlene Burnette (673-1888) , Fain & Linda Poppell (464-1282) , Jim & Derita Pinkard (229-834-4307), or Boss & Amelia Mulkey (673-1387).